

[24th July, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

(b) The total import bill as per original estimate for 2000-01 is estimated to be Rs. 58,368 crores which is based on average price of \$ 20/bbl of crude oil and corresponding product price.

(c) With a view to contain the deficit in the oil pool account, the Government have taken a number of measures such as moving product prices towards import parity and gradual phasing out of subsidy on petroleum products.

Supply of subsidised LPG cylinders to consumers

97. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how far the LPG (domestic) cylinders supplied to consumers by public sector oil companies are still subsidized, indicating the details of the pricing structure thereof the cost of production, bottling, transport and distribution;

(b) how the subsidy is distributed and utilized amongst producers and distributors; and

(c) how this price structure is linked with international prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) The current estimated subsidy on LPG (Domestic) cylinders supplied by Public Sector oil companies is about Rs. 125 per-cylinder.

The production cost of petroleum products for a company includes cost of crude oil, processing charges, marketing cost, filling charges, freight, distributors commission, taxes, other levies etc.

The oil companies are paid import parity price for LPG uplifted in bulk, which for the month of July 2000 has been provisionally fixed at Rs. 14297.98/metric tonne.

(c) The current ex-storage point price is not directly linked to the international prices. However, the Government in 1997 had decided that subsidy on LPG (domestic) will be reduced in phases to reach the level of 15% of the import parity price by 2000-01.

LPG agencies in Assam

98. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies allotted to the State of Assam during the last five years, district-wise; and

(b) the target set for allotment of new LPG agencies in the State during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) As on 1.4.2000, there were 156 LPG distributorships in operation in Assam. In order to meet the increased demand of the LPG, in addition to the locations pending from the previous Marketing Plans, 69 LPG distributorships have been included for Assam in the Marketing Plan 1996—98.

India's request to OPEC to enhance crude oil production

†99. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has requested the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to enhance the production of crude oil and to reduce its prices in the interest of developing countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether despite the immense possibilities of the investment in the petroleum sector of the country, the foreign investors are taking less interest due to red-tapism; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government to prevent it and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) In March 2000 India had made a request to OPEC Members to increase the production level of crude oil which would facilitate bringing down the oil prices to sustainable stable levels in the interest of both the producing and consuming countries.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.